

ROMAN BRITAIN

The invasion of Britain was planned by many Roman rulers. It was then carried out by Claudius at 43 AD. He did that because he wanted to increase his reputation and thus to secure his further domination. Then he found the occasion in the British leader Berikus. He was a friend of Rome and felt afflicted by the other leader so that he appeared in Rome and asked for help. Claudius ordered Aulus Plautius to invade Britain. For this Aulus Plautius was provided 4 legions. The legions and Aulus Plautius went from Gaul to Britain by ship.



First they didn't meet any enemies because the islanders went to the swamps. The swamps were very deadly for the Romans because they didn't know anything about them. But finally Aulus found the islanders and defeated Caratacus and Togodumnus the sons of the dead king Cynobellinus. So the tribe Bodunni was the first who capitulated. Aulus Plautius failed to subdue all tribes and he sent a message to Claudius. Together with Claudius the emperor as commander they got much victories and many tribes capitulated. Plautius became the first governor of the Provincia Britannia. In Britannia it was quiet for ten years. Then the king of the Iceni tribe Prasutagus died. His queen Boudica was upset because the Romans took her lands and raped her daughters. Under Boudica's leadership the Iceni and another allied tribe burned Londinium (London) and two other cities. Boudica poisoned herself after her army was defeated by Roman legions.

Between the 70s and 80s AD under the command of Gnaeus Julius Agricola the Romans occupied western and northern parts of Britain. Agricola moved northwards and defeated the Caledonian (Scottish) tribes. After the Romans gave up their conquests in Caledonia (Scotland) the construction of a big wall was ordered by the Roman emperor Hadrian.

The Hadrian's Wall was eighty miles long and it ran from Newcastle in the east to Carlisle in the west. Built to mark and secure the borders of the Roman Empire. Many parts of the monument have survived the



centuries. When Hadrian died in 138 AD Antonius Pius his successor abandoned the wall and pushed northwards. He built the Antonine Wall was abandoned around 160 AD and thereafter the Hadrian's Wall again became boundary of the Roman Empire in Britain.



After 180 AD there was an invasion by Scottish tribes (Picts) who overran Hadrian's Wall. The Roman Empire was ruled from Britain for a short time in 208-211 AD under the emperor Severus who came to defeat the Scottish tribes in the north of Hadrian's Wall. Britain was part of the "Gallic Empire" from 260 AD until 273 AD and separated from Rome again under the rebels Carausius and Allectus (286-296 AD). Emperor Constantius I recaptured the province and when he died in 306 AD after a battle against the Picts (Scots) his son Constantine the Great became the new emperor.

Constantine was the first Roman emperor who converted to christianity (in 312 AD). In the 4th century Britain was reorganised. It consisted of four provinces with military forces under the command of the Dux Britanniarum - the Duke of Britain. The next 50 years were a golden age for the Roman Empire in Britain, especially in the southwest. Towards the 4th century Britain came under massive attacks of barbarian tribes. By 410 AD Britain had slipped out of Roman control and its inhabitants left to fend for themselves. The Romans never occupied all of Britain but they left their traces on the island. Cities like London, York and Chester have roman origins.

